

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-16 and 18-53 are pending, claims 1-9 having been withdrawn from consideration. By this Amendment, new claims 34-53 are presented, and claims 10, 11, 18, 19, 28, 29, 32 and 33 are amended. Support for new claims 34-53 can be found, for example, in the present specification at paragraphs [0038] to [0041]. Support for the amendments to claims 10, 11, 18, 19, 28, 29, 32 and 33 can be found, for example, in the present specification at paragraphs [0040] and [0041], and in original claims 10, 11, 18, 19, 28, 29, 32 and 33. No new matter is added. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 30 and 31 under the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Office Action asserts that the feature of claims 30 and 31, wherein the resin powder is applied by the thermal treatment is not described in the present specification. *See* Office Action, page 3. Applicants respectfully disagree. As described in the present specification, for example, an iron powder and a resin powder are combined, molded, and then heated (i.e., subjected to a thermal treatment). *See, e.g.*, present specification, paragraphs [0037] and [0038]. Exemplary ways in which the thermal treatment can be carried out are described, for example, in the present specification, at paragraphs [0041], [0055] and [0056]. It is apparent from the present specification that Applicants were in possession of the inventions of claims 30 and 31 at the time the present application was filed. *See, e.g.*, MPEP §2163.02.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 30 and 31 are fully supported by the specification as filed. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 30 and 31 as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Office Action asserts that the term "the resin powder is applied by the thermal treatment" is not clear, because the resin powder could not be added to the compact after compaction has taken place. *See* Office Action, page 3. Applicants submit that, even though the resin powder may be present after compaction, it is the thermal treatment that applies the resin powder. As described in the present specification, the thermal treatment causes the resin to be applied so that an adhesive property is obtained. *See, e.g.*, present specification, paragraphs [0041], [0056] and [0057]. The resin powder is not added by thermal treatment, but applied by thermal treatment. One of ordinary skill in the art could readily determine whether a soft magnetic compact falls within or outside the scope of the claims. The metes and bounds of the claim are clear.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 30 and 31 are definite. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 10-16 and 18-29, 32 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,641,919 to Hayashi et al. ("Hayashi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,256,326 to Kawato et al. ("Kawato") and U.S. Patent No. 5,993,729 to Lefebvre et al. ("Lefebvre"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 10 recites "[a] soft magnetic green compact comprising: a magnetic powder including an iron system powder; and a mixed powder including a resin powder; wherein: the green compact is formed by compressively molding the magnetic powder and the mixed powder by a powder metallurgic method, and applying a thermal treatment; the resin powder has a lubrication function and a binding function; the resin powder is applied by the thermal treatment; the resin powder is present in an amount of 0.01-0.50 weight percent relative to a total weight of the green compact after molding and thermal treatment; and particles of the magnetic powder are directly bound to each other by oxidation caused by the thermal treatment" (emphasis added). Claims 11, 18, 19 and 28-33 similarly provide that a resin powder is applied by a thermal treatment. Hayashi, Kawato and Lefebvre do not disclose or suggest such compacts.

As indicated above, claims 10, 11, 18, 19 and 28-33 require that a resin powder be applied by a thermal treatment. Applying the resin powder by thermal treatment provides particular advantages and structural differences, that are not obtained when a resin powder is not applied by a thermal treatment. In particular, applying the resin powder by thermal treatment improves the adhesive properties of the resin powder. *See, e.g.*, present specification, paragraph [0041]. As conceded in the Office Action, Hayashi does not disclose compression molding or heat treatment steps or soft magnetic green compacts obtained thereby. *See* Office Action, page 5. The Office Action further concedes that Kawato does not disclose a heat treatment step or soft magnetic green compacts obtained thereby. *See* Office Action, page 5. While the Office Action attempts to rely on Lefebvre for its disclosure of a heating step (see Office Action, page 5), Lefebvre discloses heating a compacted powder element composed of binder-free particles of iron. *See* Lefebvre, column 3, lines 37 to 50. In those embodiments of Lefebvre where a binder is present, it is not present in the element obtained by molding. That is, Lefebvre, like the other cited references, fails to disclose or

suggest a soft magnetic green compact in which a resin powder is present during molding and then applied by heat treatment.

As discussed in the present specification, the presence of a resin powder during molding increases mold releaseability, and applying the resin powder by thermal treatment provides an adhesive effect – both of these steps provide a soft magnetic green compact having a different structure than is taught or suggested by the cited references. Hayashi, Kawato and Lefebvre fail to disclose or suggest the particular combination of features recited in claims 10, 11, 18, 19 and 28-33, or recognize the benefits stemming therefrom.

As none of Hayashi, Kawato and Lefebvre discloses or suggests a soft magnetic green compact including a resin powder applied by a thermal treatment, the combination of references fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of claims 10, 11, 18, 19 and 28-33.

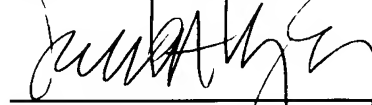
As explained above, claims 10, 11, 18, 19 and 28-33 would not have been rendered obvious by Hayashi, Kawato and Lefebvre. Claims 12-16, 20-27 and 34-53 depend variously from claims 10, 11, 18, 19 and 28-33 and, thus, also would not have been rendered obvious by Hayashi, Kawato and Lefebvre. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1-16 and 18-33 are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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